





*Slavery  
Am. States.*

LETTER



OF

HON. EDWIN G. READE,

OF NORTH CAROLINA,

TO

HIS CONSTITUENTS.

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LETTER OF HON. EDWIN G. READE TO HIS CONSTITUENTS.

*Fellow-Citizens:*

It has been said that a representative ought to keep near to his constituents, in order that they may have the benefit of his information, and he the benefit of their instructions. I shall not have an opportunity of seeing you soon, and, therefore, I adopt this method of communication. I am prompted to it at this time, because the country is in peril, and its patriotism needs to be aroused, and by the further consideration that my colleague, Mr. Clingman, has written a letter which is calculated, although not intended, to mislead, and which, from the position and reputation of the author, is likely to have a wide circulation.

I desire, in the first place, to give you such information as I have in regard to the condition of the country, its danger, and the cause. And, in the next place, to suggest the remedy.

Our country is of vast extent; of every variety of climate, soil, productions, population, and interests, and, withal, is an experiment in government; several independent sovereignties united in one—*one of many*—and yet each retaining its sovereignty—*many in one*. That there should be perplexities and difficulties is to be expected, especially when the simplest forms of government are not exempt from them. That there should be excitement and disputes is too natural to surprise us; but that, beyond this, there should be actual violence and danger, ought to arouse every man, who is capable of appreciating the beauty and excellence of our government, and its example to the world, and of imagining the shame and distraction of its failure, or the evils of its overthrow. If any indifference does or can exist, it must be because we have enjoyed the choicest blessings so long, as to suppose that there can be no end to them; and have failed

to remember the lesson, that eternal vigilance is the price of them. I do not desire to be an *alarmist*, but it is my duty to occupy the position of a *watchman*, and to cry danger while it is yet in the distance. I think there is danger now. The best informed think so. Mr. Clingman, in his late letter, says:

"That the ultimate destiny of our present political system will be determined by events soon to occur, is most probable."

I am sorry to be obliged to agree with him; but I desire to encourage the hope, that the storm which threatens to uproot, will only steadily and make us the firmer.

The causes of this unsettled condition are several; but that which seems to be prominent now, is the controversy in regard to slavery. In the same letter, Mr. Clingman says:

"The danger which now menaces the existence of the Federal Union, arises from feelings of hostility entertained in the North towards the Southern section, and especially the institution of negro slavery as it exists among us."

I have now stated the danger, and I have stated one, at least, if not the main cause.

And now, my fellow-citizens, why should the controversy between you and the North, upon that subject, threaten the destruction of the Union? That the North should be opposed to slavery, almost to a man, and that you should be in favor of it, almost to a man, is just what both sides expect, and is, in fact, just what exists. But because you cannot think alike, is that any reason why you should destroy the government? You always have differed about it, and you have differed about other matters; but you have always settled them.

In 1820, Missouri asked to be admitted, as a State, into the Union. Her constitution allowed of slavery. The North objected to her coming in, and there was a very dangerous ex-

citement about it. At length it was compromised, in this way: it was agreed that Missouri should come in as a slave State, and that all the balance of the territory we had, should be divided by a line right through it, and that all north of that line should be free. After this compromise, the public mind rested quietly. And for this I have the high authority of Mr. Clingman, who, in his letter, says:

"The anti-slavery feeling gradually subsided there, (at the North,) and the country remained quiet until a new influence was brought to bear on it."

"Here, then, you see, we had our quarrel, and we compromised it, and divided out the whole of our territory, and the country was quiet.—How much it is to be regretted that it could not remain quiet! How much it is to be regretted that any influence should be brought to bear, and disturb the nation's quiet! But it has been said that,

"The long, lean lizzard will mar the lion's rest."

And so it is that something has been brought to bear to break up the "rest" of the people! Be that influence what it may, it is an unhallowed one, and deserves the people's censure. Mr. Clingman states that influence as follows:

"Great Britain had acquired, by the force of her arms and skill in diplomacy, immense possessions in Asia. Her East Indian provinces alone contained more than one hundred millions of people, held in a state of most abject slavery," &c.

After going on to show how cruelly these people are treated by England, Mr. Clingman proceeds:

"These miserable laborers are mainly engaged in the cultivation of tropical productions, to supply the demand of the markets of Great Britain, and those of her customers. It was seen, however, that owing to the superior skill and energy of the planters of the South, they were able by means of slave labor to produce cotton, sugar, rice, &c., at lower rates, and thus undersell similar articles grown in India. The British government likewise held certain islands in the West Indies, cultivated by negro slaves, but as the amount of her interest there was comparatively small, she determined to sacrifice it for what she regarded a more important object. She accordingly emancipated her negro slaves in the West Indies, and thereby reduced the islands to a state of unproductive barbarism. *She then set in motion a system of operations to force the United States to emancipate her slaves in like manner, expecting, if this was accomplished, to be able to supply the world, at her own prices, with tropical productions from her great Eastern possessions.*"

Mr. Clingman states further, that England regarded us as a rival, and sought means to alienate the North and South, and break up the Union; and then he proceeds as follows:

"With a view, therefore, to accomplish these objects, more than twenty years ago, the British press, and book-makers generally, were stimulated to embark in a systematic war against negro slavery in

the United States. British lecturers were sent over and money furnished to establish papers and circulate pamphlets to influence the minds of the citizens of the Northern States. Looking far ahead, they sought to incorporate their doctrines into the school-books and publications best calculated to influence the minds of the young and ignorant. Their views were most readily received in Massachusetts, where there were the remains of old anti-slavery feelings, and where the British influence has, for the last half century, been greatest. From this State these doctrines were gradually diffused, to a great extent, throughout the North."

Now, are these things so? If they are not, why would Mr. Clingman say they are? You will concede that he would state nothing which he did not believe, and you will concede that he is well informed. And as confirmatory that what he says is true, (if any confirmation were wanted,) he copies from a late London paper as follows:

"The aggressive spirit of the people of the United States requires an humbling, and it is for us to perform the task. England's mission is to complete the great work commenced by her in 1834, when she liberated her slaves. There are now over 2,000,000 human beings held in cruel bondage in the United States. If therefore, the United States Government deny, and is resolved to question, the right of Great Britain to her Central American possessions, we, the people of the British Empire, are resolved to strike off the shackles from the feet of her 3,000,000 slaves. And there are those among us who will sanctify such a glorious cause."

And then Mr. Clingman says, as follows:

"There is, too, a complete understanding between our enemies in Great Britain, and their allies in this country."

I have quoted thus freely from Mr. Clingman's letter, because, from his long experience in public affairs, and his admitted ability, I thought it would be the most satisfactory proof to the administration party, with which he is acting; and, also, because I design to use it for another purpose.

It appears, then, that we had our quarrel about slavery. We settled it, and were at rest. We are disturbed again upon the same subject, and threatened with destruction. And that disturbing cause is, foreign influence!

Well might the Father of his Country warn us "against the insidious wiles of foreign influence!"

I have stated the danger, and the cause.—Now, what is the remedy? And here I must regret that I can get no further aid from my distinguished colleague, Mr. Clingman. I must not only stand unsupported by, but must stand against him. Indeed, so strange is his remedy, that I fear some one will doubt whether he understands the cause. It can only be explained upon the old adage, that

"the hair of the animal that bites will cure the wound." But there is a philosophy which teaches that long experience in political life, while it furnishes much information, clouds the judgment with a thousand phantasies of the interest of self and party; and which teaches further, that what we have been accustomed to consider very bad, and, upon inspection, find out not to be so bad as we supposed, may really not be equal to what it appears in its new light. It is creditable to our nature that, when our hate is turned to love, a sense of our injustice makes us love too much. And when we have loved an unworthy object, we hate it the worse for the love we wasted.

I cannot tell how much I must blame any or all these virtues for the loss I feel in not having the sanction of Mr. Clingman, and a few other distinguished friends, to the views I entertain, as to the proper remedy for this great, ground-swollen evil, for ignominious influence! If he has loved the Whig party more than it deserved, may he not be a little too severe in his denunciation, now that he has left it? And if he has hated Democracy, and abused it as if it had not a virtue in the world, may he not think too much of it, now that he has joined it, and finds that it has some virtue? May not a sense of the injustice he has done it, or any little spare favor that he may (hardly) expect from it, make him praise it now more than it deserves? And may not the commendable vanity which he feels that he may not be thought to be worsted by the exchange, excite in him the allowable pride of exalting his new associates above any that he has ever had before, or that any one else will ever have hereafter? As to all that, I do not know. But this I do know, that, after having made out a clear case that the country is about to be ruined by foreign influence, instead of joining those who would strike down that influence, he unites with those who would strike down them that would! Instead of maintaining the great doctrine that this country must become Americanized, he unites with these who maintain, that there shall be no difference, even in bestowing the offices which govern the country, between a native-born and a foreign-born, though that foreigner be an Englishman, who has been carefully cultivated, from the time when the earliest school-book was put into his hands, to hate our institutions.

Mr. Clingman's remedy is this: Join the administration party and strike down abolitionism.

My remedy is this: Join the American party and strike down foreignism, which is the main cause of abolitionism.

I have two objections to Mr. Clingman's remedy. The first is, that the administration party is itself an evil, and does not desire to accomplish what is proposed. And in the next place it is powerless to do it, even if it desired to do so.

And here I remark, that I have no quarrel with Democrats, as such. I am co-operating, and am proud to co-operate, with thousands of them to accomplish a great good. But the administration party, as organized, is a great evil. And such is the opinion of a great many of the best Democrats in the land; and such has been the opinion of Mr. Clingman. And to establish this fact, I will again avail myself of the assistance of Mr. Clingman, than which, whenever I can have it, I desire nothing better; because it will be so acceptable and weighty with those who maintain the contrary. In a speech which he made in the 28th Congress, to be found in Congressional Globe, vol. 14, page 115, in speaking of and denouncing the course of that party in regard to the 25th rule of the House, he says as follows:

"Was it done as compensation to *their abolition allies in the North, by whose aid they carried the great States of New York and Pennsylvania, and thereby elected Mr. Polk?*"

Again he says:

"Sir, it is a common remark, that the members of this so-called Democratic party, however they may take opposite sides on measures of policy, never split their votes; but always make a common struggle on the election day. This is owing to the fact, which I had occasion to state at the last session, that this party is held together by the cohesive power of public plunder; and, therefore, when ever they are making a struggle to get into power, it is a part of the general system of tactics, that each segment of the party should adopt that side of any question that is strongest at home, and thereby increase their chance of carrying the election."

"The only connecting tie being dissolved, the party will go to pieces. This, sir, is the rock on which you are destined to split. Though a political adversary, I warn you of the danger."

How kind! Was ever such mercy shown to such a culprit! And how unquestionably true, and dangerously certain, must have been the crimes enumerated, to have induced such a kindly, sympathetic judge to have paraded them in the face of the world, and to have given

them the enduring notoriety of a Congressional record!

On page 116 of the same, he says, in substance, that they arrayed in their behalf "the unprincipled Abolitionists." And that "each member is required to stand by his party at all hazards," (just what he says now of the Americans,) "though in doing so he should act in opposition to the best interests of the country. In turn, the party will stand by him, and protect him from the consequences of any crime, provided it be done for the benefit of the party." And now, if the administration party shall not admit this picture to be true, I beg them to remember, that if they discredit Mr. Clingman, no one will believe a word that he shall say against the Americans. On page 117 he continues as follows:

"The Abolition party had nominated as its candidate for the Presidency, J. G. Burmy; but the Democratic party, afterwards, likewise nominated him for the Legislature of Michigan. He accepted the nomination; and by that means, or perhaps by moral appearances, he was induced to use his influence with his party for Mr. Polk."

"So strong, however, sir, was the Whig party in the country, that even his manoeuvre would not have defeated us, had it not been for other similar artifices. Nearly 100,000 foreigners are estimated to arrive annually in the United States. Of this number a very large proportion are Roman Catholics. By means, which time does not permit me to recount, but the most insidious and unjustifiable, the Democratic party succeeded in inducing them to hold themselves together, and rally to the support of Mr. Polk. Some of them avowed their preference for him, because his free-trade policy *was more favorable to the interest of the mother country than the Whig policy*; and was Mr. Clay. Others *preferred him on their own terms*, that they would not be ruled by Americans. Sir, had the foreign Catholics been divided in the late election, as other sects and classes generally are, Mr. Clay would have carried a large majority, the States of New York, Pennsylvania, &c., &c., and probably others in the North-west."

"Not only did we have to content with the influence of foreigners here, but British gold was openly and profusely used," &c.

"All the world may interfere in our domestic matters." \* \* \* "And we as a nation sit stupidly quiet while she fomenters, for her own advantage, our internal dissensions."

"Men who had not been one month in the country from the penitentiaries of Europe, unacquainted with the language in which they were sworn, for that they knew not."

"Aid of the foreign Catholics, or foreigners generally, continue banded together, with a view of controlling the elections of the country, there will be *aroused antagonistic feelings in the hearts of all true Americans*, which will sweep away the party to which they have attached themselves."

Thus spoke, and such were the sentiments of, my distinguished colleague, in the 28th Congress. But then, as now, while he seems to have had a clear idea of the *cause*, yet he was utterly at fault as to the remedy. Then he

said the Whig party could put down the evils. But, instead of that, the evils put down the Whig party. And now he thinks the Democratic party can cure the evils. But the truth is, that neither of the old parties standing alone could cure the evils. Hence the necessity of the American party, composed of both the old parties.

I do not charge the Democrats, as such, with Abolitionism; but I do charge the administration, in its party organization, of dealing doubly, now as heretofore, and that it has pandered to the Abolition influence; and I proceed to offer you the evidence which has satisfied me. I have already given you the testimony of Mr. Clingman that such was, unquestionably, its policy some years ago. Read again the extracts I have quoted from his speech. They prove that they had one face North and another South; that they were allied with Abolitionists, and by unjust means united the foreign and Catholic voters.

I next offer the testimony of the Union, the organ of the party, as follows:

"The Free-soil Democratic leaders at the South, are a gold party of the Democratic party, and General Pierce, if elected, will make no distinction between them and the rest of the Democrats in the distribution of official patronage, and in the selection of agents for administering the government." (See Gen. Zachariah's speech in Congress, April, 1850.)

I next offer the testimony of Mr. Douglas, the leader of the party in Congress. It being charged in the North that the Kansas bill was favorable to slavery, he wrote to the Concord, New Hampshire Patriot, on 10th February, 1854, as follows:

"Why do you not state the matter truly, and state that it opens the country to freedom by leaving the people perfectly free to do as they please?"

Again, in a speech in the Senate, 13th March, 1850, he said that, if his measures had prevailed,

"The whole of the Territory acquired from Mexico would at this moment have been dedicated to freedom *in accordance with a constitutional provision.*"

I have given the testimony of Mr. Clingman as to what it was, and the promise of the Union as to what it would be if Mr. Pierce were elected, and of Mr. Douglas as to the purpose of his measures. I will now give the course of the President himself.

You will observe that I have shown the promise of the Union that the Free-soilers should be cared for. Well, soon after Mr. Pierce went into office, Mr. Benson, Collector of the Customs at New York, an office of great

responsibility and patronage, was instructed to put a full share of Free-soilers into office, (just as the Union promised should be done,) but Mr. Bronson refused. And Mr. Pierce removed him, although he was a Democrat, and put Mr. Redfield in his place, who was an open Free-soiler. Upon that the Democratic party split, and has remained divided ever since. One side is called the Hards or National; the other, Softs or Free-soil. The Hards are led by Dickinson, Bronson, and others; the Softs by Van Buren, Redfield, and others. Now, which of the sides would you suppose the administration favors? *It sides with the softs. That is the administration party in New York.* I quote from the National Democrat, the organ of the Hards. In its issue of April 12, 1856, speaking of the Softs, it says:

"Fortified by the patronage of the government, and stimulated by the omis de feig in high quarters, which classes them as Democrats, they are organized for new crusades against the Democratic party. That organization is the Softs—the supporters in this State of the administration; certifying now the same views upon the slavery question, which they held in 1844, and 1848," &c.

The same paper has an article headed "A word in season to Southern Democrats," from which I quote as follows:

"The National Democrats of New York refrained from opposing the administration of Mr. Pierce, until longer support of it would have degraded them; until it insidiously pursued a line of policy, which, it was for seen, would result in building up anew the Free-soil party of 1848."

The same paper quotes from the Washington Sentinel, another National Democratic paper, as follows: (speaking of Mr. Pierce.)

"You are asked if his course in the New York controversy—his prostration of the true sound Constitutional men in the North, and his vitalization of the Van Buren Free-soilers, in your approbation? Your answer is again in the negative; and yet here is the frightful record before you."

From that same paper, of its issue of April 19, 1856, I quote as follows:

"The time has therefore come when the question is to be laid before the National Democrats of other States in general convention which shall be recognized as the Democracy of New York? On the one hand the friends of Van Buren and Marcy present themselves, urging that their recognition by this present administration should be taken in bar of all investigation of antecedents; on the other hand the Hard or National Democrats have taken a solemn and serious appeal from the proscriptions of the administration and its recognition of unabashed Abolitionists as better Democrats than themselves; which appeal must come up at Cincinnati."

"When the separation of Hards and Softs occurred in 1853, after the preliminary session of the Syracuse Convention had been broken up by prize-fighters and bullies, imported by the Soft leaders from New York city, the administration at Washington, influenced by Marcy, took upon itself to declare the Free-

soilers and not the Nationals to be the regular Democracy."

Now have I not shown you, not by what I say, but by the best Democratic authority, that in the great State of New York, as large as half a dozen small States, the administration party sides with the Free-soilers, and has prostrated the Nationals?

But you ask if the course of the administration in regard to Kansas ought not, with the South at least, to atone for any and all supposed errors? I answer, no. On the contrary, its course in regard to Kansas ought to meet with censure everywhere, and especially at the South. And the witness I offer here is the President himself. These are the facts: Kansas and Nebraska are Territories of the United States. Kansas is just west of Missouri, and Nebraska is just north of Kansas. Missouri is a slave State. Kansas has the same latitude, soil, and climate; and therefore inviting to slave owners. Nebraska is not suited to slave labor. In May, 1854, Congress organized a government for these Territories. It then became the duty of the President to appoint a Governor for each of them. He appointed a Governor for Kansas 29th June, 1854. The Governor of a Territory has almost entire power at first. Now, under these circumstances, what sort of a Governor ought the President to have appointed? It seems clear that if he wanted to preserve peace he ought to have given a Northern man to Nebraska, because that was North, and a Southern man to Kansas; or, at least, as that was middle ground, he ought to have selected a sound, conservative, able man, distinguished for his moderation, and whose character would have been a guarantee of impartiality and justice, to all sections, and all interests. But instead of that, he sent a Southern man to Nebraska, and a Northern man and thorough Free soiler to Kansas; and further, a man of no weight of character, and, if the President is to be believed, of dishonest purposes. But I will let the President speak for himself. In his Kansas message he says:

"The Governor of the Territory of Kansas, commissioned on June 29th, 1854, did not reach the designated seat of his government until 7th ensuing October, and even then failed to make the first step in its legal organization. In ordering the census, until so late a day that the election of the members of the Legislative Assembly did not take place until March 30, 1855, nor its meeting until July 20, 1855. So that, for a year after the Territory was constituted by the act of Congress, and the officers to be appointed by the Federal Executive had been commissioned,

it was without a complete government, without any legislative authority, without local law, and, of course, without the ordinary guarantees of peace and public order.

"In other respects, the Governor, instead of exercising constant vigilance, and putting forth all his energies to prevent or contract the tendency to illegality which are prone to exist in all imperfectly organized and newly appointed communities, allowed his attention to be diverted from official obligations by other objects, and himself set an example of the violation of law, in the performance of acts which rendered it my duty in the sequel to remove him from office."

Now, are these things true? If they are not, why would the President say they are? Is it true that the Governor of Kansas would not go to his post until four months after he was appointed? Is it true that he would not have an election until the next March; or a meeting of the members until July? Is it true that for twelve months the Territory was without laws, and in a state of anarchy? Is it true that during this time the Governor was neglecting his duties and engaged in disreputable practices? The President says so, and the President ought to know. Then, answer me this question, *Why did he not remove him?* Was ever such a state of things heard of before? Suppose, my fellow-citizens, that for twelve months the State of North Carolina were without laws and without a government? What would you expect but the wildest disorder? And if such would be the case with the steady people of North Carolina, what would you expect in the unsettled and adventurous people of Kansas? You would expect just what occurred, distraction and bloodshed! And this is the administration that we are all advised to surrender to as the only hope of saving the country! *God help this floundering ship from such salvation!* The ship at sea, bilged and strained by the storm, without sail, compass, or helm, might drift into port; but such an administration would fall to pieces of its own weight, and sink in a cald.

But the President did remove him at last. Well, what did he remove him for? He did not remove him for his failure to discharge his duty; but he says he removed him for *certain acts that he performed*. These acts are well understood to be his fraudulent speculations in land. Gen. Whitfield, the Delegate in Congress from Kansas, whose seat is contested by the said Governor Reeder, says, in his answer to the Governor's memorial, as follows:

"Some of your speculations were so grossly immoral and illegal, that it became my duty to denounce

them in the proper quarter; and for them you were eventually removed from office."

And, speaking of the conduct of the Governor in office, he says:

"When you came into this Territory, instead of devoting your energies in good faith to the discharge of your official duties, and to preparing the way for the introduction of laws adapted to the condition of society, your whole time was occupied in fraudulent devices for enriching yourself, and for so shaping the legislation of the country as to secure a preponderance to your own *Abolition and Free-soil party*."

Observe, then, that the whole of the Governor's time was taken up in two things—one was, working for himself; the other working for the Abolitionists. He was complained against and removed for working for himself, and was not complained against or removed for working for the Abolitionists. Indeed, the President takes care not even to hint at anything of the kind.

Well, having removed Reeder, whom did he appoint in his place? Surely, now that the country is so much disordered, and as the Abolitionists have had one Governor working for them a whole year, this *par excellence* Southern rights statesman will appoint a man known to the whole country, and trusted by the whole country. No; he appoints Mr. Shannon, of Ohio—a Northern man again, if he has any habitation at all. I will do him no injustice; yet I must say that he is not known to, and has not the confidence of the country. I know but little of his history. I see it stated in the papers, and although I do not vouch its truth, yet I have no reason to doubt it, and have not heard it contradicted, that some years ago he went to California, and was in the convention that formed its constitution, and was the man who introduced the clause prohibiting slavery in California. If this be true, it may be that the President thought that as he had made one free State he could make another; and if he succeeded, why the sleepy, trusting South would suppose that it just happened so; and if he failed, why he could say to the North that he had given them two of their own men, and one of them a *master workman* in that line.

Well, but has not the President threatened that, if they do not keep quiet in Kansas, he will send the United States army there and subdue them? Yes, he has; and if you will read his Kansas message, you will find that it is so penned that the South will swear that he

is going to shoot the North, and the North that he is going to shoot the South.

Well, but in his annual message did he not maintain the rights of the South? Yes, he did. But at the same time that he is sending out his billet-doux to the South, where our chivalric feelings make us regard a man's word as his bond, he is satisfying the North with the distribution of office and emoluments, where such things are prized at least at their full value, and cover a multitude of faults. One of his latest appointments is that of Solicitor of the United States Court of Claims—not in the North but here in Washington—an important office, with a salary of \$3,500 a year, a son of the President of the late Free-soil Convention! And no instance can be given of his removing from office because of Abolitionism, while thousands of such have been appointed. Everybody knows that the way he shows his dislike is by removing from office. You cannot show an instance where he has appointed an American to an important office, and he has removed thousands for no other reason than because they were Americans. Now, why did he do it? He did it because he hated them. Well, does he not hate the Abolitionists, too? If you will show me an instance where he has ever refused to appoint one, or where he ever removed one, then I will believe it, and not till then.

Again, how many advertisements have you seen, all over the country, of anti-Know-Nothing meetings; but when did you see one of an anti-abolition meeting?

Again, turn back and read the extract from the New York National Democrat, in which it is said that *heretofore* the administration party has sided with the Free-soil Democrats, and preferred "*unwashed Abolitionists*" to the National Democrats; and says that the time has come when the question is to be submitted to the Democrats in other States, as to which they will recognise as the true men. And then read the fourth resolution of the late Democratic Convention in North Carolina, in which they praise their Northern Democratic friends, and say that they "will cheerfully unite with them as *heretofore*." Mark! as *heretofore*. What a damper upon the true Democrats North, who have been battling against the Abolitionists; and what a damper upon the true Democrats South, to be committed to such an association.

Again, read the fifth resolution of the same

convention, and see how they denounce the Know-Nothings as *corrupt*; and see how they do not denounce the Black Republicans as corrupt, but magnify their importance and speak of them with entire respect in connexion with themselves, as the two *great parties* before the country; and, as if they invited the world to come and see the chivalric conflict between these noble champions, each having in the other a "foeman worthy of his steel." But I am much mistaken if the great body of the people do not look upon it as a fight of factions, and regard the country all the safer the sooner each destroys the other. They are but factions. They cannot strut themselves into importance. They occupy the position of fops in a crowd, who mistake *amazement* at their *pretensions* for *admiration* for their importance. They congratulate themselves upon the "rapid decay" of our party, but let me warn these boasters on both sides, that *there is a stone in David's sling that never missed its aim*. And I am much mistaken if, after this coarse and unprovoked attack, they do not find a spirit before them that will not down at their bidding, and men in the land who will not cringe at the lash of a master.

It is, my fellow-citizens, a great mistake, to suppose that the present administration is anti-abolition. It is a *ti-American*, and nothing else. And it would, by its ruthless hand, long before this, have crushed out the last remains of it, if it had not been for the indomitable spirit of the American people, that never yet stooped its neck to the heel of a tyrant, and never will. Just think of it; the whole power of this administration, instead of being devoted to the stirring events in Kansas, and the great interests of the country, its highest aim has been to find at the anvil, or the work-bench, some industrious, independent, but respectful American self thinking for himself; and its greatest achievement has been to drive such a bit from his place, and ha, ha, ha! with a foreign mental that supplants him:

"Unmindful though a weeping wife  
And helpless children moan."

In the next place, I say, that the administration party cannot cure the evil if it would. It has no strength. Such has been its course of policy that it has lost its power. For this I have the high authority of Mr. Cvingman's letter. Speaking of the party, he says:

"While thus acting, however, during the late struggle, so many of its former friends left us, that it is conceded that it would have been beaten in almost every State in the Union, but for the assistance of the patriotic Whigs who have marched to its support."

Observe, then, that if left to its own strength, it would have lost nearly every State in the Union, North and South. And even with all the strength it could get from the Whigs, it has been reduced from a majority of two-thirds, which it had in the last Congress, to a minority of one-third in this Congress. Observe further, that Mr. Clingman says it lost its strength by standing up to the rights of the South. Now, if that be so, I concede that it is a powerful reason why the South should stand by it to a man. But if it was on account of its standing up to the rights of the South, how happened it that its friends in the South forsake it? Remember, Mr. C. says, but for the Whigs it would have been defeated in nearly every State in the Union—in the South as well as the North. Surely he would not utter such a slander against Southern Democrats as that they forsake the abolitionist for standing up to the rights of the South! But Mr. C. says it will gain its strength back again. Now if it lost its strength by standing up to the rights of the South, I can conceive how it can regain its strength in the South. But if its Northern friends led it for standing up to the rights of the South, can it win back those friends without deserting the rights of the South?

But the mistake lies in supposing that it lost its influence by standing up to the rights of the South. It lost its influence everywhere, and at the same time, by driving the conservative men from it, by favoring the factions North and South; and especially by its ruthless and lawless proscription of the native citizens of the country from places of trust and profit, and its encouragement of the foreign influence, even to the extent of going down into the workshop, and bidding the American stand aside, and the Englishman take his place. It has lost its influence, because the time has arrived, so plainly predicted by Mr. Clingman, in the speech from which I have quoted, when the native American spirit, so generous when fairly dealt with, and so terrible under a sense of injury, should arise and sweep it from the country.

But will it not regain its strength by accessions from other parties? The Whig, for in-

stance? I answer, never! There always has been, and always will be, a change now and then from one party to another; some from the best, and others from the worst motives. But, that the Whigs, who have been battling the Democratic party upon principle for twenty years, will ever surrender to its party organization; or, that the Democrats will ever surrender to the Whig organization, is absurd to suppose. The great mass of both of these parties were honest. Each believed that he was right, and the other wrong. Each believes so still; and neither can surrender to the other, without a forfeiture of his independence and self-respect. This is the illustration: you have been at law twenty years with your neighbor. Both of you are honest. Each thinks that he is right. It is desirable to end it. Friends interfere, and get you together. The first proposition that your neighbor makes is, that you should make to him an *unconditional surrender*! Does not that put an end to the conference? Will you not turn away indignantly and say, I have no such mean spirit as that? I will compromise, but I will never surrender.

Now, has the Democratic party ever proposed a compromise with the Whigs, and a union upon a common platform, outside the Democratic organization, to cure the evils in the country? Never! Never!! Its only terms are, *no mission*. Now, if there is a Whig in this free land, who, when a *compromise is refused*, is willing to *surrender at discretion*, all I have to say is, that his is not the spirit of his fathers, and I do not envy him his degeneracy. A very different course is pursued by the American party.

I proceed now to state my remedy for the evils in the land: it is to co-operate with the American party.

I do not claim its perfection either in its origin, its practices, or its principles, for it is human; but I do claim that it is thoroughly patriotic. Its secrecy and its oaths, which have been so much misunderstood, and so much abused, I am under no necessity to justify, because, out of respect to those who thought them objectionable, they have been abandoned. Just as Gen. Washington, who was a member of the Cincinnati Society, recommended the abandonment of some of its features, which he himself originated, not be-

cause he thought them wrong, but because he was willing to yield something to the prejudices of those who did. But I must say, in passing, that the secrecy which characterized the organization of the party, by no means shows that it was wrong. Secrecy is not a crime. The purposes and the circumstances must determine its propriety. The earliest organized resistance to England was a secret one. A band of men, painted and disguised themselves as Indians, and went on ship-board and threw over the tea. They were denounced at the time as lawless rebels. And yet which one of you now would not feel proud to trace back his ancestry to these same secret, disguised, lawless rebels? Noble men! They knew that they would be denounced, but the interest of their country required it, and their patriotism enabled them to rise above every consideration, and subject themselves to censure and suspicion. The brave man does his duty in that way that seems to him to be best, and takes the consequences, hoping the best; the coward hesitates, to see what will be thought of it, fearing the worst. They thought the circumstances justified that secrecy and disguise, which, under other circumstances, they would have condemned. And so those who originated this organization thought that the circumstances required secrecy, and they determined to incur the censure for the public good. Noble men! He deserves but little praise who stands by his country and her interests only when he can do it in sunshine, and sailing smoothly down the popular tide without a ripple or a wave to impede his course; but he who stems the current and braves the storm, whether it be danger or reproach, deserves, and will receive, sooner or later, his country's highest commendations. And when this country shall, through the means which these men originated, be freed from injurious foreign influence, they will have the same praise which these disguised men have who originated resistance to foreign oppression. But be that as it may, it now stands before the country as any other party.

Now, why should you not co-operate with it? I will notice the objections urged by Mr. Clingman, because you will be satisfied that he urges the best that can be urged, and that, if they are not sufficient, then there are none that are. He first addresses himself to the "old Whig party," and says:

"You, as such, are of course not under the slightest obligations to go for the nomination of the Know-Nothing convention, because that convention denounced both the Whig and Democratic parties as corrupt, and proclaimed that it had arisen on the ruins of both, and in spite of their opposition."

Now, I answer, first, that the Nominating Convention said no such thing. A former convention did use language of that kind, and I confess that I always thought that that was one of its faults; a trifling one, to be sure, and just such as any party, and many partisans, are too apt to commit. They will not be content with setting forth their principles, but must abuse somebody else. But I am happy to say that, like the other alleged faults, it has been abandoned. Even Mr. Clingman, with all his experience and prudence, is not free from the same fault. Hear him:

"The old Whig party (as you remember I predicted some years ago would be the case) no longer exists."

Observe the difference. The Americans only proclaimed the Whig party dead after it was dead; but Mr. Clingman prophesied its death years ago, when it had the vigor of health on its cheek. And who can tell how much that prophecy had to do with its death? Every prophet is jealous of his fame; and the prophecy having gone forth, either the party or the prophet must fail. And who can tell how much stronger is ambition than love? And who can tell how much harder he pressed down with one hand, than he upheld with the other, even when he thought he was upholding with both? I do not know as to all that; but this I do know, that I would as soon have attempted to try the destruction of Babylon, after the prophet had cursed it, as to uphold the Whig party, after Mr. Clingman had prophesied its downfall! But if you will not co-operate with the Americans, who simply *told* you of your ruin, how will you co-operate with Mr. Clingman, who *caused* it? But Mr. Clingman proceeds to say:

"But some of you may feel reluctant, after having acted against the Democratic party so long, to go into a union with it."

I answer no. We feel no such reluctance. We are not reluctant to unite with Democrats. On the contrary, we desire it. We have offered to do so, and still offer to do so. Yea, we urge it with earnestness. Mark what I say—*unite with them*. But they refuse to *unite* with us, and require a *surrender* to their party organization. Our objection is not to uniting with them on a common platform, *cessful* to both;

but it is to a humiliating surrender to their dictation. We are ready now to do the first, but we will never do the latter. We abandon, for this purpose our Whig organization, you abandon your Democratic organization, and we will meet half way—on an American platform. We will be Whig Americans, you may be Democratic Americans. You won't do it? Then draw and fight to the death! That is our spirit. But Mr. Clingman proceeds to say:

"To show that this can be done with propriety, and without loss of self-respect, let us recur to the past action of our party in the State," &c.

He then proceeds to show that the Whig party had frequently elected men to high places who had not *always* been Whigs, and I admit that this is true.

I am glad to say that the Whig party has been liberal, and is liberal still, and does not require a humiliating surrender of anybody. But if Mr. Clingman means to say that the Whig party of North Carolina ever held its independence lightly, the old love I bear it makes me say he is mistaken. It never yet forgot its dignity. And he is himself a living evidence of it. Great as was his merit, much as it desired to honor him, yet as soon as he bore hard upon its infirmities and prophesied its downfall, it turned its back upon him, preferring rather to die in his hate than to live in his servitude. For the long service he rendered, it still wishes him prosperity, and hopes that a few years of hard service and short rations will still leave him vitality enough to come back, as comes the tired stag to his starting-place, and rest in the old range. By which time, retaining all his desire to do good, he will have lost his power to do harm, and will be kindly received. And now, in very love for his new associates, I will gently remind them, that Mr. Clingman, who so truthfully prophesied the downfall of the Whigs, said that your love of public plunder was "the rock on which you would split." And that the Native American spirit against foreign influence was that which would sweep you from the country. And, although you may remove Atlas and the Pyrenees, yet you shall not escape that prophecy!

Mr. Clingman next addresses himself to the Americans, and says that he told them that the Americans would be disbanded, and advised them to stand aloof from them, and then asks affectionately:

"Do you not wish that you had taken my advice?"

I answer, No. We have more confidence in his prophecy than we have love for his advice. We must follow the fate which he predicted for us years ago, to wit: that if the foreign influence continued to be injuriously exercised, we would sweep the party from the country that so exercised it. That is our mission. Prophecy has predicted it, and we mean to maintain its infallibility. No advice, no threats, no alluements, shall swerve us a hair's breadth. Our course is right on, and onward, up to victory. And then, when our mission is ended, when we have clothed the American name with more lustre than ever Romans had, then we will listen to the advice of friends,

though they may be slightly interested therein themselves. Mr. Clingman next addresses the Democrats, and says:

"With respect to those persons who have formerly acted with the Democratic party," (of course, he does not mean the Free-soilers of New York,) "I can see no reason for their now withholding their support from it."

I answer, that I can. (Unless so far as the New York Free-soilers are concerned, I, neither, can see any reason why they should withhold their support.) And the first reason is, because Mr. Clingman is a member of it—not because his association is disreputable, but because he loves to battle with the elements of strife, brave danger, and dare himself to destruction. And although his unnatural—it may be his prophetic—strength enables him to escape, yet certain destruction awaits his confederates. So it has been, and so it will be. He never joined the party until he saw the rock in sight on which he predicted they would split, and he wants to witness the fun of the wreck.

Another objection of Mr. Clingman's is, that the American party is too weak to do anything; that its ticket can scarcely get a State in the Union. Well, that is just what he said would have been the fate of the Democrats, if it had not been for the Whigs who went to their support. If, then, these same Whigs leave them and unite with the Americans, as I think they will, it will let down the Democrats and set up the Americans. But I will show, out of Mr. Clingman's own mouth, that he is mistaken. He says:

"Twelve months ago it seemed to be formidable in its organization and members. When assailed in its opinion, however, last June, it is well known, that on the adoption of its platform condemning

further slavery agitation, the delegates of twelve Northern States, wherein its chief strength lay, seceded from the party. In the recent Convention, however, of last month, these same delegates came back," &c.

Well now, answer me this:

If it was formidable before these delegates left, and these same delegates came back again, is it not just precisely as formidable now as it was twelve months ago, when everybody admits it was sweeping everything before it?

Mr. Clingman must remember that a two-edged sword is an unsafe weapon even for him to fence with.

He proceeds to say:

"It then nominated Fillmore and Donelson. Mr. Fillmore, it is conceded, has no strength in the North."

Well now, answer me this:

If its chief strength lay in the North, and it was formidable with that strength, and the North came into the Convention and nominated Fillmore, will not the North support its own nominee? And if so, is it not a formidable ticket? And can it be true that he has no strength North? Mr. Clingman's wish was father to that concession. If he had *predicted* it, I should have been alarmed; but I laugh at his concessions.

Mr. Clingman proceeds:

"This is in part owing to the fact that he signed the Fugitive Slave act, and subsequently in obedience to his official oath endeavored to carry it out."

And, now, if this be so, is it possible that there is a Southern man who can oppose him? Or would Mr. Clingman advise us to take a man who would not sign the Fugitive Slave act, and who would not act in obedience to his official oath, in order to avoid his terrible concession, that he has "no strength at the North?" No. Rather let every patriot take an oath with his neighbor, never to desert a man who has lost his popularity by acting "in obedience to his official oath."

But it is not true, I hope, that Mr. Fillmore has sacrificed himself at the North. It is true that, by his decided and patriotic course, he did sacrifice himself with the factionists everywhere. But in doing so, he gathered around him the conservative and true men everywhere. And that is strength; the only strength that will last. In this he is precisely the reverse of Mr. Pierce. He sacrificed himself with the conservatives by courting the factionists who make the noise. And now it remains to be seen, whether in a fair contest the conservatives, or the factionists have the majority. I

know the contest will be no child's play. But brave hearts, strong arms, and a good cause are ours. And the result can hardly be doubtful. "When you are about to decide an issue of such moment, heed not the words of a few mercenary traitors among us. They have marks upon them, by which they may be known." Such is the language of Mr. Clingman's letter. I certainly would not be willing to join him in denouncing any considerable portion of my fellow-citizens as traitors, and I desire that the language may be confined strictly to such as "*have marks upon them by which they may be known.*"

Having met the principal objections, I proceed to notice the claims of our party and ticket.

I need not state to you, my fellow-citizens, that the leading idea in our movement is to counteract the undue and injurious foreign influence in this country. Ours is no crusade against foreigners, as such. It is no selfishness or exclusiveness; and is not at all against, but is confirmatory of the idea, that our country is the asylum of the oppressed. Is your house less a place of hospitality, and generosity, and charity, because you retain to yourself the right to say who shall come to it, and upon what terms they shall stay? No. It is this that makes it *your* home, and not everybody's, and enables you to dispense hospitality. Just so our country is not the less hospitable, and generous, and charitable, because we would have the power to say who shall come to it, and upon what terms they shall stay. It is this that makes it *our* country, and not everybody's; and which will enable us, for ages I hope, to secure to ourselves and dispense to others, the blessings of civil and religious liberty. This is the illustration. I say to one:

"Where do you come from?"

"I am from England."

"And do you not love your country, and the place of your nativity?"

"No; I love nothing."

"For what did you come here?"

"I came a fugitive from justice; to live upon the country and do as I please."

To him we say, "go back stranger; this country is dedicated to virtue and industry, and has no place for you."

To another I say:

"Where are you from?"

"I am from England."

"And do you not love your country, and the place of your nativity?"

"Love it? Yes; I love it with a child's fondness."

"Why came you here?"

"Because society and government oppressed me, and I came to breathe your pure air, labor in your yielding soil, and enjoy the blessings of civil and religious liberty."

"To him we say, 'Welcome stranger; live among us, with no other burdens than we ourselves will bear, and your children shall bear our proud name.'"

Do you object to this? Will any foreigner object? No foreigner that ever ought to have been allowed to come here will object. Only such as come to disturb us, or else do not understand our doctrines, will object. For, that "Americans shall rule America," is as much to their good as ours. Why, my fellow-citizens, it is not the air or the soil that makes a country, but it is the people. Look at Canada—a tributary to a monarch. She is on American soil.

Look at Mexico—poor, ignorant, feeble, priest-ridden Mexico! She is on American soil. Look at all South America, half civilized, her climate and soil equal to ours. If you could to-day remove every citizen out of this country, and move all France into it, America would be France to-morrow, with all her burdens, with all her poverty in low, and splendor in high places, with vice and irreligion everywhere, and an Emperor for her master; or, move in England, and it would be England, with all her haughtiness and oppression. And then how much better off would be the down-trodden Irishman for having fled from her cruelty? Or, move in the Romans, and it would be Rome, with all her superstition and intolerance, and ignorance, and with a Pope as God; and then how much better off would the children of the Pilgrims be, for having sought this wilderness and braved its hardships, that they might worship the Lord as God? To every native and to every well-meaning foreigner, I appeal in behalf of this movement, and assure them that the only way to keep America what she is, is to let Americans govern it.

I ask you to read again the extracts from Mr. Clingman's speech, as to the interference of England, and the object of it; it being no less than the avowed destruction of this Union. And read, also, the extracts in regard to the

influence of foreigners and Catholics in our elections, and the object they had in view, to wit: the benefit of the old countries from which they came. And surely it is alarming enough. But if such was its influence then, when we had only 100,000 a year, what must it be now that we have 500,000 a year? and what will it be when we have 1,000,000 a year? But it is not England alone that has interfered with our peace. During Gen. Washington's administration Europe was at war, and France formed the design of enlisting this country in it, and to that end sent over her emissaries and formed societies among the foreigners and among our own people; so that the whole country was thrown into commotion. General Washington called his Cabinet and threw the whole weight of his government against it, and sent a message to Congress. But the foreigners became so bold that they appealed from the President to the people; and but for the great influence of Washington, the country would have been involved in European war.

Again: You will remember, but a few years ago, when Europe was at war, the famous Keith came to this country for the avowed purpose of enlisting this country; and you remember how he paraded the country, and was toasted, and feasted, and courted, until the American spirit was aroused at his insolent proclamation that General Washington did not understand the theory of our government, or the duty of our people!

Again: In this year and the last, Europe was engaged in mighty wars. England sent over her Minister, with instructions to interest the foreigners here and our own citizens, and enlist them for service. And our government was so indignant at the insult, that war speeches have been made in the Senate, and many thought war inevitable, and it is not yet settled.

Again: It is known that Rome—Christian hating, Bible-burning Rome—that boasts of swaying a quarter of the globe, has marked us as her prey. Not by war, but by insidious wiles, more dangerous than war. And now, in view of all this, "shall we," to use the strong language of Mr. Clingman, "shall we, as a nation, sit stupidly quiet," while all the world is interfering in our domestic concerns?

As for our ticket; it was made with the view to enable the conservative men of both the old party to unite upon it, without any forfeiture

of self-respect, or of their long-cherished political attachments. If there is a man in the United States who had the entire confidence of the Whigs, and the respect of the Democrats, it is Mr. Fillmore. If there is one of whom the same may be said as a Democrat, it is Mr. Donelson. One a Whig, the other a Democrat. This is our ticket. Mr. Fillmore, after General Taylor's death, discharged the duties of President for nearly four years, with great ability and with general satisfaction. He came to the government when it was in a storm, as now, upon the exciting subject of slavery. And such was the propriety of his measures and the firmness of his administration, that he left the government in a calm, such as it had not enjoyed for many years. In that calm, the present administration came in, and such has been its course of impolicy and weakness, that the very storm which Mr. Fillmore had quieted has been raised again, and threatens us with destruction.

Give him back the government, and every factionist, North and South, would dwindle down into such a mere speck of a statesman that you might handle him with tweezers, and confidence will be restored, and the storm will pass without hurt.

Of course I do not know whether our ticket will succeed or not. But I do know that it

deserves to succeed, and I think it will. As the strength of peace and union to the strength of faction and disunion, so is the strength of our ticket in the coming election. I have given you the sum, the answer is with you.

And now let me urge you, my fellow-citizens, to the contest. If the cause were trifling or not your own, I would not press you. But it is your own, and you cannot over-estimate its importance. There may be a crust of partisanship around some that forbids me to approach them, but to the old men who have had a long life of liberty and happiness, and who may have retired and left the young on guard, I say, put on your old armor and help us once again. To the young men with whom must be the strength of the contest, I say, the cause is worthy of and demands your whole strength. *Civil and religious liberty* is the cause, *America* is the field, and *Union* the watchword. Strike the word "fail" from your Lexicon. "Put none but Americans on guard." Look to your leader. If he never mounted a war-horse, he never fell from one. He has been tried and is worthy. He is one of you, is near by you, and will never deprive you of your honors or your bread because you are Americans, but will encourage you to rise, as he has risen, from the humblest to the proudest position.

EDWIN G. READE.

## CIRCULAR.

The undersigned, members of the *National-Executive Committee of the American Party*, have pleasure in announcing to the people, that satisfactory arrangements for the future maintenance of the *AMERICAN ORGAN*, as an authoritative exponent of the principles of the *American Party*, have been completed.

Recommencing its labors, under these new auspices, the undersigned cheerfully commend the *AMERICAN ORGAN* to the generous confidence of the *American Party*, in every section of the Confederacy, and they hope its columns may command the widest circulation.

HUMPHREY MARSHALL, of Ky.  
SOLOMON G. HAVEN, of N. Y.  
J. MORRISON HARRIS, of Md.  
JACOB BROOM, of Penn.

WASHINGTON CITY, D. C., May 15th, 1856.

### Prospectus of the American Organ.

The *American Organ* having been adopted, by the *Executive Committee* of the *American members of Congress*, as the central organ of

the *American party*, the proprietor, with a view to its general and extensive circulation throughout the country, has determined, on consultation with his political friends, to furnish the same to subscribers, whose subscriptions are remitted after May 1st, and during the months of May, June, and July, on the following reduced terms, to wit:

|                                                                                     |       |        |
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All communications should be directed to the *American Organ, Washington City, D. C.*

VESPASIAN ELLIS,

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